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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 VATICAN 003387

SIPDIS

DEPT. FOR EUR A/S JONES, EUR/WE MENNUTI, NEA, AF

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SUBJECT: ASSISTANT SECRETARY JONES JULY 17 VATICAN MEETINGS

REF: VATICAN 3185

CLASSIFIED BY: AMBASSADOR JIM NICHOLSON, REASONS: 1.5 (B) AND (D).

SUMMARY

11. (C) VATICAN ACTING FM MONSIGNOR PIETRO PAROLIN TOLD A/S BETH JONES JULY 17 THAT THE HOLY SEE WAS FIRMLY BEHIND THE ROAD MAP, AND HAD APPEALED TO ISRAELI FM SHALOM TO REFRAIN FROM RETALIATION. A/S JONES URGED THE HOLY SEE TO HELP STRENGTHEN ABU MAZEN'S POSITION. THE HOLY SEE REITERATED ITS CONCERN FOR THE POSITION OF CATHOLICS IN IRAQ AND URGED THAT THE U.S. DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ENHANCE THE SECURITY SITUATION. A/S JONES REVIEWED PRESIDENT BUSH'S AFRICA TRIP, EMPHASIZING HIS FOCUS ON HIV/AIDS AND BIOTECH FOODS. THE HOLY SEE NOTED THAT IT WAS INTENSIFYING ITS COLLABORATION WITH THE UN IN AFRICA, WHILE THE SANT' EGIDIO COMMUNITY REVIEWED ITS EFFORTS TO SECURE USG FUNDING FOR ITS ANTI-RETROVIRAL PROGRAM IN MOZAMBIQUE. A/S JONES EMPHASIZED U.S. SUPPORT FOR TURKEY'S ENTRY TO THE EU, WHICH THE HOLY SEE INDICATED IT WOULD NOT OPPOSE ONCE TURKEY HAD MADE GREATER PROGRESS ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM. PAROLIN INDICATED THAT THE SITUATION OF CATHOLIC PRIESTS IN RUSSIA WAS IMPROVING, EXCEPT FOR A REQUIREMENT FOR VISA RENEWAL EVERY THREE MONTHS. END SUMMARY.

HOLY SEE BEHIND ROAD MAP

12. (C) MEETING JULY 17 AT THE VATICAN WITH ACTING FM MONSIGNOR PIETRO PAROLIN AND IN ROME WITH SANT' EGIDIO COMMUNITY LEADERS, A/S JONES EMPHASIZED THAT SECRETARY POWELL DEPENDED ON THE HOLY SEE'S MORAL AUTHORITY TO HELP PRODUCE RESULTS IN KEY AREAS SUCH AS THE MIDDLE EAST AND IRAQ, AS WELL AS ON GLOBAL ISSUES SUCH AS HIV/AIDS, TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS, AND BIOTECH FOODS. PAROLIN COMMENTED THAT SECRETARY POWELL'S JUNE 2 MEETING WITH THE POPE AND SECRETARY OF STATE SODANO HAD BEEN "FRUITFUL" AND MUCH APPRECIATED IN THE VATICAN.

13. (C) SINCE THE SECRETARY'S DISCUSSIONS ON THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, A/S JONES NOTED THAT MUCH HAD BEEN DONE TO MOVE THE PROCESS FORWARD. WITH ABU MAZEN BEING INVITED TO THE WHITE HOUSE, FOLLOWED BY A VISIT BY PM SHARON, A JOINT MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO LEADERS, AND SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS IN EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA, JONES OBSERVED THAT THERE WAS SOME MOMENTUM BEHIND THE PEACE PROCESS. TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS, ABU MAZEN NEEDED TO BE ABLE TO SHOW RESULTS TO SHORE UP HIS POSITION INTERNALLY. SHE EMPHASIZED THAT THE SECRETARY WAS LOOKING TO THE HOLY SEE TO HELP BUILD UP ABU MAZEN SO HE HAS THE AUTHORITY HE NEEDS TO MAKE AGREEMENTS WITH SHARON FOR PEACE. PAROLIN INDICATED THAT HE HAD RECENTLY MET WITH ISRAELI FM SILVAN SHALOM AND HAD EMPHASIZED TWO POINTS: THE HOLY SEE'S SUPPORT FOR THE ROAD MAP AND THE NEED TO BUILD A CONFIDENT ATMOSPHERE BETWEEN THE PARTIES. IN THIS REGARD, THE HOLY SEE HAD APPEALED TO THE ISRAELIS TO "REFRAIN FROM RETALIATION" IN ORDER TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE. SHALOM'S RESPONSE WAS SIMPLY TO REITERATE THAT "SECURITY IS VERY IMPORTANT TO US."

14. (C) SANT' EGIDIO'S LEADERSHIP TOLD A/S JONES THAT THEY HAD JUST RETURNED FROM THE MIDDLE EAST, WHERE THEY HAD MET WITH BOTH ABU MAZEN AND SHARON. SANT' EGIDIO'S BETTI LAMENTED THAT CATHOLIC PALESTINIAN PATRIARCH MICHAEL SABBAAH WAS NOT YET BEHIND ABU MAZEN, BUT SAID THEY HAD ENCOURAGED HIM TO EMBRACE MAZEN, WHO, UNLIKE ARAFAT, CAN DELIVER ON HIS
PROIF2FQGQOQL.AGC*QJQY+-XL&#}FQZ*QFI"QQ/4JQME 4QQQQA9Q&@ENUCXQ|I4ZSNQWQ `NQXQ{]+\\XQ":#3Q}UU=Q"QA8D]Q/\Q`S\$PZVKQU8MK*. >Q-Q|\`Q#-----
FOCUS ON AFRICA: HIV/AIDS AND BIOTECH FOODS

17. (SBU) A/S JONES REVIEWED FOR PAROLIN AND SANT' EGIDIO THE PRESIDENT'S TRIP TO AFRICA, NOTING THAT IT HAD GENERATED GREATER INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION FOR U.S. EFFORTS TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF HIV/AIDS AND TO USE THE PROMISE OF BIOTECH FOODS TO MEET THE CONTINENT'S NUTRITION NEEDS. JONES EMPHASIZED THAT AFRICA HAS BEEN A CONTINUING PRIORITY FOR THE PRESIDENT, WHO RECOGNIZED EARLY ON THAT HIV/AIDS WAS WIPING OUT WHOLE GENERATIONS OF TEACHERS, FARMERS, HEALTH WORKERS AND OTHER KEY SECTORS OF PEOPLE ESSENTIAL TO AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT. PAROLIN WELCOMED THIS ATTENTION, OBSERVING THAT THE HOLY SEE VIEWS AFRICA AS A "FORGOTTEN CONTINENT" AND CONTINUES TO ADVOCATE FOR GREATER INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT. FOR ITS PART, THE HOLY SEE HAS INTENSIFIED ITS COLLABORATION WITH THE UN ON AFRICA FOLLOWING A FEBRUARY MEETING BETWEEN KOFI ANNAN AND THE POPE. SENIOR REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE VATICAN'S DICASTRIES (MINISTRY EQUIVALENTS) ARE MEETING NOW TO DEVELOP SPECIFIC INITIATIVES FOR THIS NEW COLLABORATION, PAROLIN INDICATED.

18. (SBU) REGARDING BIOTECH FOODS, PAROLIN TOLD A/S JONES THAT THE HOLY SEE WAS "BUILDING A POSITION" AND HOPED TO BE ABLE TO ARRIVE AT A CLEAR VIEW THAT COULD BE SHARED WITH BISHOPS AND NUNCIOS. FOR THE TIME BEING, HE SAID THE HOLY SEE WAS "NOT AGAINST, AND NOT IN FAVOR." AT THE SAME TIME, THE VATICAN RECOGNIZED THE MORAL IMPORTANCE OF FEEDING THE HUNGRY, AND WAS CONSIDERING AN INTERIM POSITION THAT WOULD EMPHASIZE THE SAFETY OF FOODS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION, WHILE RESERVING JUDGMENT ON AGRICULTURAL USES UNTIL THEY HAD EXAMINED THE ISSUE MORE CLOSELY. A/S JONES SAID THE U.S. HAS FOCUSED ON BIOTECH FOODS IN TERMS OF THE BENEFITS THEY COULD BRING TO PEOPLE WHO ARE ABSOLUTELY DESPERATE. SHE ADDED THAT WE "CAN'T IMAGINE WHY SUCH FOOD SHOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE TO PEOPLE WHO WANT IT, AND WHY SUCH TECHNOLOGY SHOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE TO THOSE WHO WANT TO GROW BIOTECH CROPS." PAROLIN SAID IT APPEARED TO THE HOLY SEE THAT THE EU WAS SOFTENING ITS POSITION, AND A/S JONES SAID WE WERE PRESSING THE EU TO EASE UP ON ITS RESTRICTIONS. AMBASSADOR NICHOLSON EMPHASIZED THAT THE KEY QUESTION THAT ALL PARTIES NEEDED TO REFLECT ON WAS WHAT NEEDED TO BE DONE TO KEEP PEOPLE FROM DYING OF

HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION-RELATED DISEASE.

¶9. (SBU) A/S JONES EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE HOLY SEE'S AND SANT' EGIDIO'S ONGOING WORK TO PREVENT AND TREAT HIV/AIDS. SANT' EGIDIO'S BETTI OUTLINED THE COMMUNITY'S ANTI-RETROVIRAL TREATMENT PROGRAM IN MOZAMBIQUE, WHICH HE EMPHASIZED WAS EXACTLY IN LINE WITH THE PRESIDENT'S EMERGENCY FUND GOALS. HE WELCOMED RECENT INDICATIONS OF SUPPORT THAT SANT' EGIDIO HAD RECEIVED FOR THE PROJECT FROM HHS SECRETARY TOMMY THOMPSON AND U/S DOBRIANSKY DURING RECENT MEETINGS. BETTI CAUTIONED THAT THE U.S. WAS LIKELY TO RUN INTO A STRONG HEADWIND FROM MANY RECIPIENT COUNTRIES, WHO WILL WANT TO USE THE NEW FUND FOR EVERYTHING EXCEPT TREATMENT -- WHICH THEY CONSIDER TOO EXPENSIVE. RECOGNIZING THIS ISSUE, HOWEVER, BETTI POINTED OUT THAT HIV/AIDS SHOULD BE SEEN NOT ONLY AS A PROBLEM, BUT ALSO AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RESHAPE AFRICAN HEALTH SYSTEMS. BETTI INFORMED A/S JONES THAT SANT' EGIDIO WAS PREPARING A CONFERENCE AT GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY THIS FALL AIMED AT BUILDING SUPPORT FOR THE MEDICAL CASE FOR TREATMENT AND EXPLORING BEST WAYS TO APPROACH THIS TASK. JONES WELCOMED SANT' EGIDIO'S INITIATIVE, AND URGED THAT THE

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DINATOR RANDALL TOBIAS.
SHE PLEDGED TO PROVIDE THE COMMUNITY WITH INFORMATION ON HOW BEST TO LINK UP WITH TOBIAS.

TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

¶10. (SBU) POINTING OUT THAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS WAS BOTH A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE AND ONE OF BORDER SECURITY, A/S JONES REVIEWED U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO ADDRESS THIS SCOURGE, INCLUDING THE PRODUCTIVE FOCUS DURING THE DUTCH OSCE PRESIDENCY. PAROLIN EMPHASIZED THE VATICAN'S SUPPORT FOR ANTI-TRAFFICKING INITIATIVES, NOTING THAT THEY ARE CURRENTLY ENGAGED WITH THE COUNCIL FOR EUROPE, WHICH IS ESTABLISHING A WORKING GROUP TO LOOK AT THE ISSUE. PAROLIN INDICATED THAT THE VATICAN WAS LIKELY TO APPOINT A WOMAN TO HEAD THEIR DELEGATION AS A SIGN OF THEIR RECOGNITION OF THE DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT TRAFFICKING HAS ON WOMEN.

TURKEY AND THE EU: OVERCOMING RELIGIOUS RESTRICTIONS

¶11. (C) RESPONDING TO A RECENT STATEMENT FROM THE HOLY SEE'S FOREIGN MINISTER THAT WAS SEEN AS RAISING DOUBTS ABOUT TURKEY'S FITNESS FOR EU MEMBERSHIP, A/S JONES SAID THE U.S. VIEWED TURKEY AS WANTING A EUROPEAN FUTURE. THE NEW GOVERNMENT HAD GIVEN PRIORITY TO PASSING NEW LEGISLATION THAT WILL ALLOW TURKEY TO MEET EU CRITERIA, SHE POINTED OUT, AND THE CHALLENGE NOW WAS TO ENSURE IMPLEMENTATION. HERE, TOO, SHE NOTED, WE HAD SEEN TURKEY TAKE POSITIVE STEPS. PAROLIN ASKED WHETHER THE U.S. WAS CONVINCED TURKEY WANTS TO BE IN THE EU, OBSERVING THAT THE HOLY SEE HAD HEARD SUGGESTIONS THAT THIS WAS A "FACADE." JONES SAID SHE HAD NEVER HEARD SUCH A SUGGESTION AND THAT ALL THE INDICATIONS WE HAD FROM TURKEY REFLECTED A GENUINE COMMITMENT TO EU MEMBERSHIP. PAROLIN AFFIRMED THE HOLY SEE'S POSITION THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY "MUST HELP TURKEY," AND STRESSED THAT THE VATICAN WAS "NOT AGAINST TURKEY'S ENTRY TO THE EU." NEVERTHELESS, THEY BELIEVED TURKEY HAD TO MEET THE EU'S CRITERIA ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND IMPLEMENT THEM. "SO FAR," HE ADDED, "THE STEPS TAKEN ARE NOT ENOUGH." A/S JONES ASKED PAROLIN WHETHER THE HOLY SEE HAD A GOOD DIALOGUE WITH TURKEY ON THESE ISSUES. HE RESPONDED THAT THERE WAS A GOOD DIALOGUE, IN WHICH THE HOLY SEE HAD INVOLVED EU MEMBERS, BUT THAT TURKEY HAD REACTED NEGATIVELY ON KEY ISSUES. SPECIFICALLY, PAROLIN NOTED THAT THE CHURCH HAD NO JURIDICAL STANDING, AND WAS NOT ALLOWED TO OWN PROPERTY. WHILE THERE IS FREEDOM OF WORSHIP, TURKEY DOES NOT ALLOW FOR FREE RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION IN PUBLIC. A/S JONES ENCOURAGED THE HOLY SEE TO CONTINUE TO PRESS THEIR CONCERNS, POINTING OUT THAT WE, TOO, OFTEN HAD TO OVERCOME NEGATIVE TURKISH REACTIONS BEFORE MAKING PROGRESS.

RUSSIA: SITUATION IMPROVING DESPITE HASSLES

¶12. (C) ASKED ABOUT THE SITUATION FOR CATHOLIC PRIESTS IN RUSSIA THAT HAD PROVOKED A PAPAL LETTER TO PRESIDENT PUTIN LAST YEAR, PAROLIN INDICATED THAT THE SITUATION WAS MUCH IMPROVED. RUSSIA IS NOW WILLING TO RECEIVE THE PRIESTS AND ALLOW THEM TO WORK. THE OUTSTANDING PROBLEM IS THE SHORT LENGTH OF THE VISAS ISSUED TO THE PRIESTS -- THREE MONTHS -- WHICH THE HOLY SEE REGARDS AS GRATUITOUS BUREAUCRATIC HASSLING THAT REQUIRES PRIESTS TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY ONCE EVERY THREE MONTHS. THEY ARE IN DISCUSSION WITH THE GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE, AND BELIEVE THEIR NEW NUNCIO IN MOSCOW HAS MADE PROGRESS IN BUILDING A CONSTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE RUSSIAN AUTHORITIES. THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, ON THE OTHER HAND, REMAINS DIFFICULT. THE RUSSIAN PATRIARCH'S ILL HEALTH HAS ALSO MADE PROGRESS DIFFICULT, AS THE CHURCH IS CURRENTLY IN A HOLDING PATTERN IN ITS DIALOGUE WITH THE HOLY SEE. A/S JONES NOTED THAT WE HAVE RAISED HOLY SEE CONCERNS ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ISSUES AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL AND WOULD BE WILLING TO DO SO IN THE FUTURE IF NECESSARY. PAROLIN WELCOMED THIS COMMITMENT, AND AGREED TO KEEP THE U.S. APPRISED OF PROGRESS.

ROMA/SINTI: A BLOT ON EUROPE'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD

¶13. (SBU) SANT' EGIDIO OUTLINED TO A/S JONES ITS DECADES-LONG ENGAGEMENT ON BEHALF OF ROMA AND SINTI, PARTICULARLY IN ITALY. CLAUDIO BETTI SAID THAT ITALY'S TREATMENT OF ITS ROMA COMMUNITY REPRESENTED A MAJOR HUMAN RIGHTS EMBARRASSMENT, ONE IT SHARED WITH OTHER WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. HE NOTED THAT ITALY'S ROMA AND SINTI LIVE WITHOUT WATER AND SANITATION, THEIR CHILDREN DO NOT ATTEND SCHOOL, AND THEY ARE

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I URGED THE U.S. TO
ENGAGE ITS EUROPEAN PARTNERS ON BEHALF OF THE ROMA AND SINTI,

CALL ATTENTION TO THIS HUMAN RIGHTS GAP, AND ENCOURAGE THE EUROPEANS TO ADOPT NEW LAWS AND MEASURES TO OVERCOME THE CURRENT DESPERATE SITUATION FOR THE ROMA IN ITALY AND ELSEWHERE IN EUROPE.

NICHOLSON

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